Special Education Issues

Charter School Directors' Meeting January 10, 2011

Procedure Manuals

 All new Charter Schools must submit a Special Education Policy and Procedure Manual to Leah Voorhies at USOE by February 1, 2011.

 A template is available on the USOE Special Education website under the Tabs "Resources" and then "Instruction Services":

http://www.schools.utah.gov/sars/Resources. aspx

Vision and Hearing Screenings

- 53A-11-201. Rules for examinations prescribed by Department of Health ---Notification of impairment.
 - (1) (a) Each local school board shall implement rules as prescribed by the Department of Health for vision, dental, abnormal spinal curvature, and hearing examinations of students attending the district's schools.

Vision and Hearing Screenings

- The requirements for screening the vision and hearing of students identified with disabilities are (the same as) the requirements for eligibility/re-eligibility evaluation. Every three years, a student must be reevaluated for eligibility for special education in all areas of suspected disability. (USBE SER II.F.e.3.) Vision and hearing issues have to be ruled out as reasons for learning problems before SLD can be used as eligibility criteria (USBE SER II.J.10), etc.
- The Health Department is responsible for vision and hearing screening requirements. They have said that special education students should be screened every three years because of the USBE SER law above, but that they actually recommend annual screening as best practice.

Vision Screenings

- DSBVI states that special education students should be screened every three years because of the USBE SER cited above, but that they actually recommend annual vision screening as best practice for all students.
- 53A-11-203. Vision screening.
- Cindey Page, who is responsible for vision screening records for the state, recently said they are currently working on re-writing the vision screening rules to say it must be done every year, and they hope to have the new rules in place in the Spring of 2011.

Hearing Screenings

Jocelyn Taylor, who is the Speech and Hearing Specialist at USOE, offers the following as **best practice guidelines for hearing screenings** because accommodation for hearing loss has been shown to have a positive impact on achievement.

- Special education students are screened annually.
- Students who have been referred for special education.
- K, 1, and possibly 3rd or another grade at the discretion of the LEA.
- New students are screened.
- Students identified with minimal hearing loss as it is becoming more prevalent due to the use of ipods and headsets are screened annually.

Diagnoses, Disabilities and Special Education

- Special Education eligibility requires:
 - Has a disability
 - Disability adversely affects education and functional performance
 - Requires special education and related services
- Disability and Diagnosis are not synonymous
 - Consider outside evaluation, including diagnosis

Special Education Evaluation Request

- LEA receives an evaluation request
 - Can be verbal or written
- Determine if evaluation is recommended
 - If no, give parent(s) WPN of refusal to evaluate
 - Can be a letter or form
 - If yes, evaluate and determine eligibility
 - Must meet all three prongs of eligibility